

Inspection of a school judged Good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Bell Farm Primary School

Hersham Road, Hersham, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey KT12 5NB

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 December 2024, and 6 March 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to belong to this very friendly and happy school community. They have an in-depth understanding of the school's charter of values, which they live out daily through their positive behaviour. Starting from the early years, pupils are kind and caring. They play exceptionally well together. Pupils sustain their focus in lessons. They are eager to share their ideas when discussing the topics they learn.

The school has high expectations of what pupils should achieve. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), who have a curriculum offer that serves them well. Over time, pupils develop a detailed body of knowledge across various subjects. Many pupils become strong and passionate readers with high levels of numeracy. The school's published outcomes reflect this and show that pupils achieve very well from their various starting points.

The school's ability to build pupils' character is a remarkable strength. The wide range of educational visits and residentials include all pupils and build up important social skills and confidence. Pupils visit museums, beaches and farms, for example. The school has a deep-rooted culture of celebrating successes and making pupils feel valued. The impact of this is that pupils share how secure they feel in themselves.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school's efforts to build an ambitious curriculum have been successful. This has resulted in the careful organisation of important knowledge and specific vocabulary that pupils need to learn. Pupils recall and apply what they have learned confidently. For example, they can work with fractions and decimals with ease and accuracy in

mathematics. In history, pupils share the experiences of soldiers during war, writing with accuracy, empathy and maturity.

Pupils master the use of complex vocabulary. This is clear in their writing, which shows their creative thought and ability to explain ideas on paper. Pupils can shift with confidence between writing descriptions, analysis and fiction. They include ambitious vocabulary to extend their points. Many pupils show high levels of pride in their work. It is well presented. Consequently, pupils' writing is of a high quality.

The school's provision for pupils with SEND is of a high standard. Teachers adapt their lessons to help pupils learn well. Teachers are experts in their subject knowledge and have received high-quality training and guidance. Staff identify pupils' needs promptly. They make effective use of the full range of external help available. Teachers use their skills to adapt learning effectively which meets individual learning needs. Pupils with SEND, including those in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision), receive the highest quality of care and flourish.

Pupils are enthusiastic readers who love that they can borrow books from the impressive library and 'dragon's den' to read for pleasure. The school ensures that pupils read challenging texts and discuss their favourite characters and stories with enthusiasm. Starting in Nursery, staff focus on the words and expressions that children need to become confident communicators. Many pupils become fluent and capable readers by the end of Year 1 through the priority that the school places on teaching reading. Staff receive effective training and support. The programme is exceptionally well taught. Due to frequent and accurate checks, pupils' reading books precisely match the sounds they are learning. Pupils who find reading a challenge receive expert guidance that helps them to catch up.

The school takes continuous action to increase the attendance of pupils. When attendance is a concern, the school involves parents to bring about improvements. Staff have close links to external partners and understand the reasons for absence, which means that they can help pupils come to school regularly.

Pupils learn how to become independent and how to stay safe. They take on a range of leadership roles, including being mentors, to learn what it means to be responsible. The school's support to help pupils understand diversity is positive and appreciated by all. Pupils learn about a wide range of cultures and beliefs. They value differences and treat others with kindness and deep respect. This comes from being taught about fundamental British values and appreciating others' beliefs. Parents and carers recognise the effort that goes into this work and compliment the guidance the school offers. This includes engagement through parent workshops on safety and early child development.

The school's programme for professional development is of a high standard. It enables staff to develop their expertise and to reflect on their practice. This means that teachers are constantly improving and innovating. Staff engage in establishing new initiatives and trust the leaders to help manage their workload. As a result, they can focus on teaching

well. Governors engage in the life of the school. They understand and fulfil their responsibilities effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in March 2015.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and

pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked-after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	125058
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10341569
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	684
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Eric Verheijden
Headteacher	Anne Cooper
Website	www.bell-farm.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with communication and interaction needs.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection started on 3 December 2024. Inspectors returned on 6 March 2025 to gather additional evidence in line with Ofsted inspections and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence policy.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the

extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors also held discussions with the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- As part of the inspection process, inspectors visited the specialist unit and spoke to members of staff based there.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also took into consideration the online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Peter Stonier, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ann Pritchard

His Majesty's Inspector

Karim Ismail

His Majesty's Inspector

Kirstine Boon

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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